

Excavations: Additional Discussion Points

Instructor Note: Review the additional discussion points for specific application to the job at hand. For example, let the crew know who is the “Competent Person.” Explain what the Competent Person is required to do (see below). This reinforces the training and is a further sign of your commitment to have a safe and healthy workplace.

Additional Discussion Points:

A competent person must inspect the site daily. This includes both excavation and the surrounding area. Inspection Points include but are not limited to:

- Possible cave-in's.
- Failure of protective systems and equipment.
- Hazardous atmosphere.
- Other hazardous conditions (i.e., following rain or man-made condition such as blasting).

Adequate protection must be provided against falling objects such as dirt, rock, equipment or other materials for workers.

A warning system should be used to alert equipment operators of the edge of an excavation.

Employees exposed to public vehicle movement must wear warning vests. Alternative is suitable garment made of reflectorized or high-visibility material.

A guardrail system is recommended especially if there are walkways or bridges crossing over an excavation. (See ramps and runways for additional information.)

During excavation operations, special care must be taken to insure no employee is under a load handled by digging or lifting equipment.

Employees should not be permitted to work in excavations where water has accumulated without adequate precautions. Adequate precautions include but are not limited to: Diversion dikes, ditcher or other means to prevent surface water from entering an excavation and to provide drainage to nearby areas.

While an excavation is open, underground installations such as utilities must be protected, supported or removed as necessary to safeguard excavation workers.

Adjacent structures must be supported to prevent possible collapse.

Employees should not enter an excavation greater than four (4) feet in depth without a competent person testing the atmosphere. Testing takes place where oxygen deficiency or a hazardous atmosphere exists or is believed to exist.

Emergency rescue equipment must be readily available. This equipment must be attended when hazardous atmospheric conditions may develop or exist.

Special Company Procedures Notes:

References:

WISHA Excavation, Trenching and Shoring Standards **WAC 296-155-Part N**